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Seventh meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole

Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon
7-14 April 1986

Item 12 of the provisional agenda*

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twenty-first session of the Commission/ Twelfth meeting of the Conference of Ministers

Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon
17-21 April 1986

Item 12 (b) of the provisional agenda*

LC/NAIROBI.

REPORT OF THE SEVENTH MEETING OF THE AFRICA REGIONAL CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT

YAOUNDE, CAMEROON
3-5 APRIL 1986

* E/ECA/TPCW.7/1
E/ECA/CM.12/1

A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The Seventh meeting of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee on the Integration of Women in Development (ARCC) was held in Yaounde, Cameroon from 3 to 5 April 1986. The meeting was organized by the Economic Commission for Africa and hosted by the Government of Cameroon. The meeting was opened by the Minister of Women's Affairs of Cameroon, Mrs Aissatou **YAO.** Opening addresses were also delivered by the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the representative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the Chairperson of ARCC (see section C below).

2. The meeting was attended by the following member States of ARCC: Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo, Egypt, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Malawi, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Togo, Zaire and Zimbabwe; Cameroon and Guinea attended as observers. The Organization of African Unity was present. Representatives from the following organizations of the United Nations system were present as observers: Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), and United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). Non-governmental organizations present as observers were the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

3. The Bureau of ARCC comprised as follows served as officers for the meeting, with the exception of the United Republic of Tanzania which was absent:

Chairperson	: Burundi
First Vice Chairperson	: United Republic of Tanzania
Second Vice Chairperson	: Congo
First Rapporteur	: Togo
Second Rapporteur	: Morocco

B. AGENDA

4. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening ceremony.
2. Adoption of the agenda.
3. Report of the Chairperson of ARCC.
4. Subregional Reports and Reports of the implementation of resolution 535 (xx) by:
   (a) The Subregional Committees on the Integration of Women in Development; and
   (b) The African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW).
5. Africa region follow-up to the World Conference to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace.
6. The extent to which national development plans take into consideration the contributions of women.
7. African women and the Industrial Development Decade for Africa - final report.
8. The special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the economic crisis in Africa.
9. Other matters.
10. Closing.

C. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

Opening ceremony (agenda item 1)

5. In her opening address, the Minister of Women's Affairs of Cameroon noted the progress that ARCC had made, with the assistance of ECA and the United Nations Development Programme, in becoming operational. She underlined African achievements during the United Nations Decade for Women in establishing national machineries for the integration of women in development, but stressed the need to step up their efforts to participate in the national development planning process and to make efficient use of resources available to them.

African countries shall devote a greater proportion of their resources to the promotion of women in development in order to reduce dependence on external aid, and there was a need for co-ordination of efforts for the promotion of women between the United Nations system, governments and non-governmental organizations.

6. The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA emphasized the importance of the meeting. As the first meeting of ARCC after the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women (Nairobi 1985), it had a significant role in implmenting the Nairobi Strategies for the Advancement of Women Beyond the End of the United Nations Decade for Women. Especially important among these were the need to better equip women to expand their roles in society, and the overriding urgency of improving the productivity of women in agriculture, in order to alleviate the food crisis in Africa would discuss the role of General Assembly on the economic crisis in Africa would discuss the role of women in food production. He urged women to establish a dialogue with the planning departments of their countries to support the assistance provided by UNDP to the women's programmes of the MULPOCs, ARCC and regional training programmes.

7. The Chairperson of ARCC expressed her gratitude to the Government of Cameroon for its continued devotion to the promotion of women, noting that this was the second time that Cameroon had hosted the meeting of ARCC. In addition, Cameroon had served as Chairperson of ARCC for four years. She reviewed the progress that ARCC as a subsidiary organ of the ECA Conference of Ministers had made, working in collaboration with the United Nations system, governments and non-governmental organizations towards the advancement of women in Africa, despite major obstacles that had stood in its way. She applauded the success of the workshop organized by ECA for members of ARCC on UNDP programming exercises held in Yaounde on 2 April 1986 in informing ARCC members of necessary actions to secure the full participation of women in major development efforts in their countries over the next five years. Through that meeting, ARCC members had realized the need for greater vigilance and dynamism in order to assure that the needs of women in their countries would be included in national planning.

8. The representative of OAU underlined the commitment of African Heads of State and Government to the full participation of women, in full recognition of the role of ARCC as the highest body dealing with the integration of women in development of Africa. In its preparations for the special session of the General Assembly, OAU remained fully cognizant of the importance of discussions on women, with particular emphasis on their role in food security. OAU itself was in the process of establishing a structure within its secretariat to promote the integration of women in development.

Report of the Chairperson of ARCC (agenda item 3)

9. During the year the Chairperson had numerous contacts with the OAU, with respect to the World Conference (Nairobi) and the inclusion of women's interests in the Summit on Economic Affairs and the special session of the General Assembly. She had made concerted efforts to prepare member States for their participation in the Nairobi World conference so that the report of the conference would reflect African interests. Throughout the year, her sensitization work had continued, especially with regard to continuation of UNDP funding for subregional programmes for the integration of women in development within the MULPOCs. She urged that subregional Committees increase their efforts to exchange information among themselves and to disseminate information to ARCC.

Subregional reports and reports on the implementation of resolution 535 (XX) (agenda item 4)

(a) By Subregional Committees for the Integration of Women in Development

Subregional Committee of the Gisenyi-based MULPOC

10. Under this agenda item, Subregional Committees reviewed their activities over the past year in addition to reporting on the implementation of resolution 535 (XX). In each case, the reports were presented by the Chairperson of the respective Subregional Committees. The fourth meeting of the Subregional Committee for the Economic Community of Great Lakes countries based in Gisenyi had been held in Bujumbura in March 1986. The Chairperson introduced the report of that meeting E/ECA/MULPOC/GISENYI/9/13/85. Regrettably, the work programme for 1985-1986 had not been carried out as envisaged, largely due to the lack of a women's programme co-ordinator for the last ten months. Nevertheless, the Subregional Committee had drawn up a work programme for 1986-1987 which included preparation of documentation and undertaking of research on women in the subregion as well as mounting of national projects. A workshop was projected in one country on palm oil production and marketing and at the subregional level a colloquium on the legal status of women. However, since funds for activities were highly limitable, it was urged that balances from 1985 be carried over to 1986.

11. Regarding implementation of resolution 535 (XX), it was indicated that the member States of the Subregional Committee had reported on that matter to the fourth meeting. Rwanda and Zaire had implemented the Convention on the elimination on all forms of discrimination against women and Burundi was in the process of doing so. National machineries had been established in two of three countries of the subregion, Burundi and Zaire. All three countries were acting to eradicate legislation remaining from the colonial period, some of whose provisions discriminated against women. As for access to education, efforts had been made in the three countries to increase the number of girls attending school, because the colonial administration had left a legacy of huge imbalances: boys had been greatly favoured in education at the expense of girls, who had been given training only in homecrafts. Efforts were also being made to improve opportunities for women in employment. The number of women qualified to attend technical meetings at international level was small, and greater efforts needed to be made to put women on national planning committees. The three countries had actively supported the struggle against apartheid in southern Africa.

12. The Subregional Committee had made recommendations which expressed their concern about the lack of a women's programme co-ordinator, the need for additional assistance to women's programmes in the subregion, and the urgency of their countries making provisions for women's programmes in their national budgets and UNDP in its Indicative Planning Figures (IPFs). They were especially concerned that the progress made during the Decade for Women not be lost. To that end, the Gisenyi MULPOC Subregional Committee proposed, inter alia, that programmes for women should be included in the regular budget of the United Nations system.

North Africa Subregional Committee

13. The Chairperson of the Tangier-based Subregional Committee introduced the report of the meeting of the Bureau of the Subregional Committee (ECA/MULPOC/TANGIERS/E/615) which had been held in Tangier in March. Their gravest concern was that funding for the programme had been suspended. Thus, there was neither a women's programme co-ordinator nor funds for activities during the period in question. In addition, prior to suspension of the programme, the women's programme co-ordinator had been in post for only a short time. They expressed their disappointment that the North African subregion had thus not benefited from women's programmes to the extent of the other subregions. Nevertheless, they had adopted a work programme and established priorities for 1986-1987, placing emphasis on vocational training and income generation as well as documentation. In that connection, the Chairperson had recommended, on behalf of the Subregional Committee, that ECA should approach UNDP and other financing bodies in order to finance those two periods pending the next UNDP programming cycle. Gratitude was expressed to Egypt for provision of funds for an expert to assist the programme for the integration of women in development in preparing the next programming cycle; the expert, however, would not replace the co-ordinator.

14. The Chairperson reported on the implementation of resolution 535 (XX) at the national level in Morocco. Morocco had established a national machinery under the Ministry of Social Affairs and had undertaken research, organized conferences, and initiated the training of women in non-traditional occupations. Women were well represented in the civil service and in delegations to international meetings. National strategies had been drawn up to implement the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women in Africa Beyond the United Nations Decade for Women (adopted in Arusha, 1984). Morocco had for many years included women in national planning efforts and decision-making and devoted substantial resources to their activities. Firm support had been evinced for the struggle of African women in Namibia and South Africa.

Central Africa I Subregional Committee

15. The Chairperson introduced the report on the women's programme of the Yaounde-based MULPOC (MULPOC/YAO/CRAC/7). Among the major activities that had been carried out in the last year were a subregional seminar on appropriate food technologies that had been held in Yaounde in February 1986 and a seminar in Chad on the establishment of national machineries and co-ordination of activities for the promotion of women. The women's programme co-ordinator had undertaken missions to prepare countries for the fourth UNDP programming cycle. A study had also been undertaken on the situation of school drop-out girls in order to determine ways in which to make them economically active. The seventh meeting of the Bureau of the Subregional Committee had recommended that each member State should establish a unit for interministerial co-ordination and reflection on the actions carried out by the Government on behalf of women. The implementation of resolution 535(XX) had proceded in the subregion without problem.

16. The Subregional Committee reported that the Subregional Council of Ministers meeting, held at Bangui in February 1986, had adopted two resolutions regarding women in the subregion: one on the need for a subregional policy on appropriate technologies and the other on the financing of programmes for the integration of women in development. In the latter resolution UNDP had been urged to continue its assistance to subregional women's programmes, and Governments had been requested to furnish assistance to national machineries to participate in national planning exercises.

17. Among the activities envisaged for 1986 and apart from the publication of an information bulletin on women's activities in the subregion, there was still a study to be prepared on the marketing of food products and a subregional training seminar to be organized on the topic in addition to publication of a newsletter on activities of women in the subregion. Missions would be undertaken to four countries in conjunction with UNDP programming exercises.

East and Southern Africa Subregional Committee

18. The Chairperson of the East and Southern Africa Subregional Committee introduced the report of the sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Subregional Committee (ECA/MULPOC/LUSAKA/158/15). Numerous activities had been undertaken during the period April 1985-February 1986 in the areas of training, exchange of information, experience and skills, establishment of national machineries, research and provision of advisory services. A subregional workshop on women, water and sanitation had also been held in Malawi.

19. At its meeting the Subregional Committee had passed a resolution, subsequently endorsed by the MULPOC Council of Ministers, underlining the importance of the subregional women's programmes as an agency of subregional co-operation and urging its continuation; the Executive Secretary of the ECA had also been urged to ensure continuation of the subregional programme through the mobilization of additional resources. Member States had been similarly requested to pledge funds for its continuation.

20. Three States from the subregion had furnished information on the implementation of resolution 535(xx). All three had operating national machineries. Zimbabwe had held a meeting of senior officials to draw up a five year plan for the integration of women in development and for the implementation of the Arusha strategies. Tanzania had held a national workshop on the implementation of the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies while in Malawi the Commission on Women in Development was working with the League of Malawi Women to promote the advancement of women.

West Africa Subregional Committee

21. The Chairperson introduced the report on the implementation of the work programme of the West Africa Subregional Committee on the Integration of Women in Development ECA/MULPOC/NIA/PIWD/86. Since the fourth meeting of the Subregional Committee held in Togo in February 1985, the Bureau of the Subregional Committee had been occupied principally with participation in the statutory meetings of the MULPOC and of the ECA as well as implementation of recommendations. Among the activities undertaken by the Niamey-based women's programme co-ordinator in 1986 were a study on the role of women in food production in two countries, granting of fellowships to women for training in management and development planning, undertaking of an inventory on women and industrialization in West Africa, subregional seminar on the role of co-operatives in the integration of women, in industrial development and the exchange of information among national machineries pending the publication of a newsletter.

22. Efforts had been made to assist women in national planning efforts in Togo and Niger in preparation for the fourth UNDP programming cycle and within the framework of sectoral follow-up meetings to donor round table. Regarding the implementation of resolution 535(XX), national machineries had been established in all the countries of the subregion. Nigeria had recently set up a women's Bureau. Three countries of the subregion, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Nigeria, had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

23. The Chairperson of the Subregional Committee joined the other subregions in stressing the importance of this meeting in ensuring continuation of women's programmes beyond the Decade for Women. At a time when the continuity of resources was in doubt, the meeting needed to urge present donors to continue their assistance, stimulate member States to provide funds for women's programme and to explore new sources of securing human and financial resources for the advancement of women in the subregion.

(b) The African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW)

24. The secretariat introduced the report of ATRCW on the implementation of resolution 535(XX) during the period April 1985 - 1986 (E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCC/VII/2). It was pointed out that in the Africa region, there were now 27 national machineries as well as 20 other focal points within political structures for the integration of women in development. A regrettable tendency had been discerned on the part of donors to bypass national machineries in providing assistance for women in the region in favour of technical ministries. In view of the strengths of national machineries in the region, this was a tendency that needed to be combatted. It was emphasized that the Arusha Strategies served as an important guide to member States in their programming exercises.

25. Regarding the provision of regular budget posts for women's programmes in the Region, the meeting was informed that the General Assembly had granted one new regular post to the regional women's programme in 1986.

Regrettably, as a result of the budget crisis in the United Nations, recruitment for that post had been frozen. She urged imaginative solutions to the financial situation, exploring such sources of funding as the United Nations Trust Fund for Africa and improving utilization of existing resources. Gratitude was expressed to those member States which had pledged resources to women's programmes.

26. In discussion of this agenda item, the meeting expressed its grave concern regarding the question of continuation of financial resources for women's programmes at the national, subregional and regional level. The need for close co-operation of efforts between subregional committees and co-ordinators of women's programmes, as well as the regional programmes, at ECA headquarters was emphasized. Political bodies at the national level also needed to be contacted. The importance of this meeting endorsing the recommendations made by subregional committees in this regard was emphasized. The Secretariat appealed to member States to increase their self-reliance in implementing resolutions related to the promotion of women. On the other hand, the difficulty in sensitizing national delegations to the General Assembly was pointed out.

27. The secretariat was requested to carry out studies on the existence of reliable data on the situation of women and to undertake programmes to ensure the collection and analysis of such data where they were found to be deficient. In addition, ECA was urged to [illegible] provide qualified personnel to staff the women's programme on a permanent basis.

Africa region follow-up to the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (agenda item 5)

28. Introducing E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCCVII/3, the secretariat reviewed the recommendations of the World Conference, compared the Arusha Strategies with the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies and made suggestions to member States on developing plans to implement the strategies at the national level. The Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies foresaw the need for structural transformations and technological breakthroughs in the next 15 years if the situation of women in Africa was to improve, in the light of the predictions of a slowdown in economic growth over the period. Important areas of emphasis were the intensification of efforts to end women's illiteracy and to extend their life expectancy to 65 years (from the present 47 years). Both the Arusha and Nairobi documents stressed the need to build on the gains of the Decade and to review the situation of women at five-year intervals. While the Nairobi document was global, the Arusha Strategies had selected priority sectors for concentration of limited resources, including agriculture and food production, desertification, industrial and human resources development, health and environment.

29. In the context of follow-up to the initiatives of the Decade, the OAU representative detailed the plans to establish a unit within the OAU secretariat to promote the integration of women in development. Several representatives raised the question of the unit's relationship with the Pan African Women's Organization which had been in existence since 1962, had its own subregional structures, and was interested in mounting economic projects. Concern centred on whether the creation of a new structure was timely in view of the severe constraints on resources available for the promotion of African women in development and the existence of PAWO, as well as the regional and subregional machineries established by African member States through ECA. The OAU representative specified that the OAU was establishing a new structure within its secretariat which would enable it to handle women's questions better, in response to a resolution of Organization's member States. The Chair confirmed the consensus that all possible assistance was needed in order to meet the extensive needs of African women; any institution that wished to strengthen its capacity to assist African women should be encouraged. Through well-planned harmonization of efforts, each institution could pursue its specific objectives without duplication of activities. The essential point was the maximation of resources for the integration of women in development in Africa.

30. The representative of WHO described her organization's programme on women and health development, which had set up village health projects in most African countries.

The extent to which national development plans take into account the contributions of women (agenda item 6)

31. Introducing document E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCCVII/4, the secretariat noted that only 10 African States had made specific mention of women in their national development plans; fewer than five made specific budgetary allocations for the promotion of women. Obstacles to the inclusion of women's needs in development planning were outlined under the rubric of psychological, sociological, structural and organizational constraints.

32. Documentation submitted to the Regional Seminar on National Machineries for the Integration of Women in Development (Addis Ababa, 1982) had suggested structures to promote the technical efficiency of national machineries, particularly through research and programming units, but the Seminar had resisted in large part the installation of such structures. Another assessment of national machineries should be made at the end of the Decade for Women to see if the structures that had been established had been able to work with technical ministries in national development planning, since a need was currently apparent for the establishment of research programming and follow-up units within those machineries.

33. Several actions were incumbent upon national machineries in order to remedy the lack of attention to the needs of African women in national development plans. African women needed to increase their technical competence in specialized fields, exploit fully existing data on the situation of African women, take part in planning and programming exercises and supervise the implementation of approved plans. In addition, they should inform themselves of all existing sources of funding, including regional development banks.

34. The level of African participation at the March 1986 meeting of the United Nations Commission for the Advancement of Women (Vienna, - formerly the Commission on the Status of Women) had been regrettably low, with only one of the eight African member States of the Commission represented at the meeting. If African women were concerned about their representation in international forums, they needed to assume the responsibilities given to them.

35. One delegation pointed out that an in-depth study needed to be made on planning for women, so that better national strategies could be elaborated for their participation in development. The Secretariat replied that if members could share their national experience in planning, a document could be prepared which would serve as a guide for the benefit of all national machineries.

African Women and the Industrial Development Decade for Africa - final report (agenda item 7)

36. Introducing document E/ECA/ATRCW/ARCCVII/5, the secretariat said that ATRCW had undertaken case studies on the experiences of Egypt, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and the United Republic of Tanzania with respect to women and industrial development. The results showed a low level of participation of women in industrial development; where they were employed, it was in low-paid and low-skilled jobs. An exception was Egypt, where significant numbers of women were working in non-traditional occupations and in technical fields.

37. The participation of African women in industrial development could be increased if they continued to take jobs deemed appropriate for women; however, that approach was subject to technological displacement, and held little hope for advancement. On the other hand, if women directed themselves to more attractive openings in scarce technical specialities, long and arduous training was required. Women's organizations could be very helpful in preparing young girls to take that road. The most promising alternative for large numbers of African women was to participate in the development of small and medium-scale enterprises in the agro-industrial field, an area where women's food cycle activities gave them a comparative advantage. National machineries needed to assist women to gain the necessary technical and financial resources to enter that increasingly competitive area.

38. It was pointed out that as a result of favourable laws and traditions, women in Egypt had a long history of full participation in economic development. Increasing numbers of Egyptian women were joining the industrial labour force annually, and Egyptian women were achieving parity in important fields such as medicine, communications and information.

39. It was stressed that the Technical Preparatory Committee of the whole would discuss progress made in the implementation of the Programme of the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, ARCC should ensure that the ideas on the subject expressed at its meeting were communicated to TEPCOW, so that the Ministers of Planning could take into account the situation of women in Africa with regard to the region's industrial development.

Special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the Economic Crisis in Africa (agenda item 8)

40. The representative of OAU informed the meeting of the preparations made in Africa for the special session of the General Assembly on the economic crisis in Africa. A priority programme for the economic recovery of Africa had been adopted, and specific projects for its implementation had been set forth in the document entitled

"Africa's submission to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the economic and social crisis in Africa". Special note had been taken of the issue of African women, in view of the Lagos Plan's recognition of women as a priority sector in economic development and in the context of ensuring the region's food security. Specifically, African women's needs would be included under assistance to small farmers, especially women; training programmes for African women; and projects to improve the conditions of family life. He requested the support of ARCC for the proposals.

41. While welcoming the inclusion of women in the priority programme, several delegations would have preferred women to have been more involved in the preparations for the African region. A member of the secretariat remarked, however, that women sometimes had to invite themselves to ensure that their voices were heard. Representatives were anxious to be involved also in implementing the projects that would emerge from the special session and it was suggested that modalities for that purpose should be worked out at the present time. Representatives also stressed that the total amount of assistance for women in the proposals should be quantified. The OAU representative took note of the need to specify the amount of assistance intended for women and to channel correspondence to national machineries.

42. The meeting considered that the preparations for the special session underlined the need for OAU to create a structure within its secretariat for dealing with issues relating to women and economic development. It was also recommended that the Chairperson of ARCC attend the special session.

Other matters (agenda item 9)

43. The representative of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) explained the new status of the Fund, since July 1985, as an autonomous fund in association with UNDP (in accord with General Assembly resolution 39/125) and its expanded mandate to serve as a catalyst to insure the involvement of women in development planning from the pre-investment stage through implementation as well as to support innovative projects for women. To implement its mandate, UNIFEM was assisting women to participate in UNDP-sponsored donor roundtables and country programming exercises. At the special session of the General Assembly, UNIFEM intended to mount a ceremony honoring an African woman farmer.

44. Two draft resolutions were presented to the meeting. Their texts as amended and adopted are presented below in section E.

D. CLOSING (agenda item 10)

45. The Deputy Executive Secretary of ECA reviewed the agenda of the meeting and congratulated the participants on the seriousness of their deliberations on behalf of African women. The Chairperson of ARCC said that the meeting would result in decision makers and planners being aware of the substance of the integration of women in development. In reviewing the advances made on behalf of women in the region, she felt that most progress had been made in the legal and political areas, but that few benefits had reached women at the grassroots level. The remaining challenge was how to involve such women more fully in development, in view of their vital role in ensuring the food security of the region. African women leaders had to assume greater responsibility, she said, to ensure that commitments made in various meetings were fulfilled. She urged the United Nations to provide more regular budget posts for the Africa women's programme.

46. Delegates voted two motions of thanks, the first to the Government of Cameroon, with special mention of the Minister of Women's Affairs, for hosting the meeting, and the second to the ECA secretariat for their efforts in preparing the meeting.

47. The Cameroonian Minister of Women's affairs said that the achievements of the meeting had been to end the isolation of national delegations through the exchange of experiences. The flow of ideas, she suggested, should be continued through study tours and exchange of newsletters. The meeting had made clear the imperative for more African women to participate in national and international affairs. She declared the meeting closed.

E. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE MEETING

1. Resolution on women and development in Africa

The seventh meeting of the Africa Regional Co-ordinating Committee, which met at Yaounde from 3-5 April 1986,

Recalling Economic Commission for Africa Conference of Ministers resolution 535 (XX) on women and development, adopted in April 1985,

Recalling United Nations General Assembly resolution 40/103 dated 13 December 1985, on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women,

Recalling, finally, resolution E/CN.6/1986/L.24 of the Commission on the Status of Women on the Arusha Strategies,

Still aware of the urgency of including the women's component in national development projects, programmes and plans,

Resolved to maintain and develop the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace,

Concerned by the gravity of the economic crisis which is affecting more severely the African countries and bearing in mind the pressing need for subregional and regional machineries established to promote, reinforce and develop the equitable participation of women in development in Africa,

Concerned also by the financial crisis now besetting the United Nations which seriously affects the United Nations programmes and staff,

Aware of the importance of UNDP financing of the Programme for the Integration of Women in Development in Africa,

Considering the expanded mandate of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, set forth in resolution A/Res/39/125, and its African Investment Plan serving as a framework for its activities in Africa,

Appreciative of the effective contribution of the ECA women's programme to the advancement of African women,

1. Appeals to the African Governments to do everything possible to include the women's component in national development plans, programmes and projects, while encouraging the implementation of specific programmes and projects for women, whenever this seems possible;

2. Requests the African Governments to do everything within their power to mobilize and release the funds with a view to implementing the Arusha Strategies and the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women;

3. Requests the African Governments to associate national women's machineries with national planning and programming exercises and with negotiation exercises with the international, inter-governmental, regional and subregional financing institutions so as to ensure more ways and means of integrating women in development;

4. Requests the African Governments to do everything possible to appoint an official in charge of women's affairs in their missions and embassies accredited to the United Nations to ensure that all meeting resolutions and recommendations capable of having an impact on global or sectoral actions for the integration of women in development are transmitted to the national women's machineries with a view to follow-up;

5. Calls upon the African Governments to take all possible action within and outside Africa in order to ensure, on the one hand, that the number of African women recruited to posts is increased in the United Nations regular budget and, on the other hand, to ensure the promotion of African women to decision-making posts in the Economic Commission for Africa and at the United Nations;

6. Urges national machineries for the integration of women in development:

(a) To do everything possible to be present at the different stages of the preparatory and programming exercises of the fourth UNDP programming cycle;

(b) To organize national information sessions with the relevant technical services and with the non-governmental organizations on the contribution of women to national planning and to the fourth programming cycle;

(c) To exercise continuous vigilance in order to participate in decision-making activities relating to the formulation of plans and to the allocation of resources in this context; and to ensure that resolutions concerning women in development are taken into consideration and followed up;

(d) To ensure that technical programming, follow-up and research units are established within their machineries to collect, process and disseminate pertinent data concerning women and their activities with a view to their better integration in development.

7. Expresses its thanks and profound gratitude to UNDP for its financing of subregional and regional women's programmes;

8. Appeals to UNDP through both its Africa and its Arab Bureaux:

(a) To continue providing its support to the programme at all five ECA MULPOCs for integrating women in development, to ESAMI and ARCC during the fourth programming cycle 1987-1991;

(b) To prepare, or assist ECA in preparing, for national machineries for integrating women in development an information document on its financing machineries and on the other sources of financing of the United Nations system as well as the procedures for gaining access to such financing;

(c) To release funds for the training and technical specialization of experts of national machineries in order to enable these experts to present project documents which will meet the needs of governments and requirements of the financing institutions, and to give priority to projects that include women's components;

(d) To assist national machineries for women in obtaining the allocation of part of the IPF in the projects and programmes for integrating women in development;

(e) To give a new impetus to the women's programmes of the Gisenyi and Tangier MULPOCs by maintaining the outstanding balance of the funds of the previous cycle and appointing new co-ordinators;

(f) To co-operate in the recruitment of African national consultants for the purpose of formulating and implementing programmes for the integration of women in development and thus contribute to enhancing the planning and programming capacities of national machineries;

9. Requests the United Nations Development Fund for Women, in the context of its strategy for implementing its expanded mandate, particularly through its participation in the donor round-table process and in UNDP country programming exercises, to continue its activities in collaboration with the activities of the MULPOCs for the integration of women in development;

10. Requests the Executive Secretary of ECA to take appropriate measures to ensure that ARCC and ATRCW participate in the meeting of planners, statisticians and demographers in order to sensitize them on the Arusha and Nairobi Strategies concerned with the problems of women in development;

11. Urges the Executive Secretary of ECA to do everything possible to mobilize new financial resources both from the African Governments and from other sources of funds with a view to diversifying and increasing the resources of the MULPOCs programmes for integrating women in development

12. Requests the Executive Secretary and the Chairperson of ARCC to report to the eighth meeting of ARCC on the progress achieved in implementing this resolution at the national, subregional and regional levels.

2. Resolution on the United Nations special session on the economic crisis of Africa

The seventh meeting of the Africa Regional Coordinating Committee (ARCC) held in Yaounde, Cameroon from 3-5 April 1986,

Conscious of the current economic and social crisis facing the African continent, and the potential for women in agriculture and food production to alieviate the crisis,

Having examined the preparations being made by the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa for the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the African economy and social crisis,

Concerned that the special session of the General Assembly will yield positive results for Africa,

Convinced that the improved participation of women in the agriculture and food production is a major part of the answer to Africa's economic crisis,

1. Notes with appreciation the decision of the United Nations to convene the special session of the United Nations General Assembly to formulate strategies that will be intended to resolve the present economic and social crisis in Africa;

2. Calls on the Economic Commission for Africa and the Organization of African Unity, even at this late hour, to ensure that the African presentation to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly scheduled to take place in May 1986 reiterates the key role of women in African development as highlighted in the Arusha Strategies for the Advancement of Women;

3. Calls upon member States, the United Nations and its agencies, donors and development organizations to allocate a specific percentage of funds made available for the economic recovery of Africa towards the special and specific needs of women as food producers, such special and specific needs including:

(a) Access to farming land;
(b) Access to financial credit;
(c) Decision-making regarding usage of land;

(d) Appropriate education and training of women in order to equip them adequately with the skills required for their multiple roles, particularly in the area of food production;

4. Calls upon the member States of OAU and ECA to ensure that any structures or machineries that may be established as a follow-up to the implementation of the Priority Programme for the Economic Recovery of Africa include women;

5. Urges African member States to include representatives of women's organizations in their delegations to the special session of the United Nations General Assembly, not only at ministerial level, but at the level of technical experts as well.

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Seventh meeting of the Technical Preparatory Committee of the Whole

Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon, 7 to 14 April 1986

Item 12 of the provisional agenda*

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Twenty-first session of the Commission/ Twelfth meeting of the Conference of Ministers

Yaounde, Republic of Cameroon, 17 to 21 April 1986

Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

LC/NAIROBI

REPORT OF THE THIRD MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL GROUP OF EXPERTS FROM MINISTRIES OF FINANCE, CENTRAL BANKS AND LEGAL DEPARTMENTS ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN AFRICAN MONETARY FUND

* E/ECA/TPCW:7/1
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A. INTRODUCTION

1. The third meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts from Ministries of Finance, Central Banks and Legal Departments on the Establishment of an African Monetary Fund was held in Yaounde, Cameroon, from 2 to 5 April 1986. The purpose of the meeting was to review the outstanding issues relating to the establishment of an African Monetary Fund which were unresolved during the second meeting held in Addis Ababa from 11 to 15 April 1985 and the Draft Articles of Agreement. The meeting also considered the progress report on the preparations for an International Conference on Africa's External Indebtedness.

B. ATTENDANCE

2. The meeting was attended by experts from Ministries of Finance, Central Banks and Legal Departments of the following 21 countries: Algeria, Benin, Cameroon, Chad, the Congo, Egypt, Guinea, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, the Sudan, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zaire and Zimbabwe. Representatives of the Banque de l'Afrique de l'Ouest (BCEAO), the Banque des Etats de l'Afrique centrale (BEAC), the Banque Ouest-africaine de developpement (BOAD), the ECOWAS Fund and the International Monetary Fund attended the meeting as observers.

3. The meeting was serviced by a joint secretariat composed of the representatives of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Development Bank (ADB), the African Centre for Monetary Studies (ACMS) and the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

C. OPENING OF THE MEETING

4. The opening ceremony was presided over by the Head of the Egyptian delegation in his capacity as outgoing Chairman.

5. Mr. M. Tchouta-Mousa, the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa made an opening statement on behalf of the Executive Secretary who could not be personally present. In welcoming delegates to the third meeting, he expressed ECA's appreciation to the Government and people of Cameroon not only for agreeing to host the meeting but also for their warm hospitality. He also thanked the delegates for responding to the invitation to attend the meeting. He pointed out that their presence was a testimony of the importance which their Governments attached to the establishment of an African Monetary Fund. He also expressed similar sentiments to the Organization of African Unity, the African Development Bank, the African Centre for Monetary Studies and the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning for the valuable co-operation which they had given to the Economic Commission for Africa in the preparatory activities.

6. He then went on to inform the meeting that the Heads of State and Government of the OAU summit in 1980 viewed the establishment of an African Monetary Fund as one of the strategies designed to accelerate economic and social development in the African region through effective monetary and financial co-operation. Since 1980 the monetary and financial situation had deteriorated seriously because of a number of factors such as: (a) the absence of a unified monetary system in the African region; (b) the fact that national currencies had not achieved any degree of autonomy as they were pegged to one or the other of the world's major currencies; and (c) non-existent and limited national money markets coupled with a low degree of monetization. He furthermore pointed out that it was against such a background that an African Monetary Fund was being created in order to assist African countries in dealing with monetary and financial problems. Moreover, the Fund, when created, would provide balance-of-payments support and finance intra-African trade, provide consultative machinery on all monetary and financial matters at the African region with a view to evolving an African monetary system through monetary and financial co-operation among African countries, whereby those countries would strive towards harmonizing their monetary, currency and exchange policies and practices as well as designing appropriate external debt management systems.

7. Turning to other agenda items, he pointed out that the meeting was also expected to consider the progress report on the preparations for the proposed International Conference on Africa's External Indebtedness called for by the twenty-first summit of OAU in July 1985.

8. In his opening statement, the representative of the Secretary-General of OAU, Dr. Djomatchoua Toko expressed thanks and gratitude to the Government and people of Cameroon for the cordial reception, and the excellent arrangements for the meeting. He informed the meeting that the Secretary-General of OAU was tied up with previous commitments in connection with the preparations for the special session of the United Nations General Assembly which would be discussing the critical economic situation in Africa.

9. On the issues before the meeting, the OAU representative stressed the seriousness of Africa's external indebtedness, capital participation of non-African countries in the African Monetary Fund, whether or not national currencies should constitute part of the Fund's capital resources, and the composition of the Executive Board. He said that it was incumbent on the experts to submit clear recommendations on all the outstanding issues in order to facilitate the work of the Ministers later in the year. The establishment of the Fund, he said, was important in the context of implementing the Lagos Plan of Action, and in strengthening intra-African monetary co-operation as called for in Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990.

10. On the proposed International Conference on Africa's External Indebtedness, the OAU representative referred to the meeting of the secretariats of ECA, ADB, ACMS and OAU, the report of which was submitted to the meeting.

He explained the general objectives of the proposed conference and called on the experts to be clear in their recommendations.

11. In conclusion he recalled the close co-operation that had existed between OAU and ECA in institution-building, and hoped that the establishment of the Fund would mark another milestone in the area of intra-African co-operation.

12. In opening the third meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts from Ministries of Finance, Central Banks and Legal Departments, His Excellency Mr. Tikela Kemone, Secretaire d'Etat in the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Cameroon, speaking on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon, welcomed the delegates to the meeting and assured them of his Government's support in ensuring the success of the meeting. He informed the meeting that his Government attached great importance to the establishment of an African Monetary Fund and in particular to the meeting of experts, by stressing the following: firstly, the establishment of an African Monetary Fund was in accordance with the decision of the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity contained in the Lagos Plan of Action; secondly, the creation of an African Monetary Fund was envisaged as a strategy designed to improve Africa's monetary and financial situation at the regional and international levels; and thirdly, because the agenda included an item on the preparations for an International Conference on Africa's External Indebtedness, an issue that featured prominently in Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990 adopted by the twenty-first Assembly of Heads of State and Government of OAU in July 1985.

13. He informed the meeting that the international economic situation, in particular the financial and monetary environment, was hostile and Africa was adversely affected by recent developments. The consequences of both internal and external developments and the debt-servicing crisis, worsening of balance-of-payments deficits and the decline in the flows of official development assistance were emphasized. The collapse in the commodity prices due to the world economic recession and increase in real interest rates in the early 1980s greatly contributed to the problems that Africa was experiencing today.

14. In conclusion, the Honourable Secretary of State for Finance called upon the meeting to help in resolving outstanding issues so that an African Monetary Fund could be established. In this connection, he hoped that the draft Articles of Agreement before the meeting would be seriously considered by experts and be submitted to the forthcoming Conference of Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks to be held in Libreville in June 1986.

D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

15. The meeting elected the following countries to constitute the bureau:

Chairman	Cameroon
First Vice-Chairman	Togo
Second Vice-Chairman	Zimbabwe
Third Vice-Chairman	Tunisia
Rapporteur	United Republic of Tanzania

E. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

16. The meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Opening of the meeting.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work.
4. Review of outstanding issues and the report of the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts.
5. Review of the draft Articles of Agreement on the establishment of an African Monetary Fund.
6. Consideration of the progress report on the preparations for an International Conference on Africa's External Indebtedness.
7. Any other business.
8. Adoption of the report and closure of the meeting.

F. ACCOUNT OF PROCEEDINGS

17. Before considering the substantive items on the agenda, the issue of a quorum was raised and discussed at some length. The meeting held the view that since the meeting of experts was intended to prepare a draft of the Articles of Agreement and make recommendations to the Conference of Ministers of Finance and Governors of Central Banks, the question of a quorum should therefore not impede the proceedings of the meeting. The report of the meeting will be sent to all member States in the usual manner. Another meeting of experts will precede the Conference of Ministers of Finance in Libreville, Gabon, in June 1986.

Review of outstanding issues and the report of the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on the Establishment of an African Monetary Fund, (agenda item 4)

18. A representative of the secretariat, in introducing this agenda item, referred to the report of the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts on the establishment of an African Monetary Fund (E/ECA/CM.11/76)

and pointed out that there were three outstanding issues from the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts namely: whether or not to allow external participation in the capital of the Fund and, if so, in what proportion; secondly, whether or not contributions to the capital should be made in both convertible and national currencies; and the number of the Executive Directors to be appointed to represent the African countries in the Fund. He pointed out that the purpose of this agenda item was not to reopen the debate but merely to find out if there were any new developments since April 1985, in the absence which, the issues would be referred to the Conference of Ministers of Finance as recommended by the second meeting. He also pointed out that certain issues discussed during the second meeting, such as the allocation of subscriptions to the capital of the Fund and the exchange rate and exchange control policies of African countries (E/ECA/TRADE/37 and E/ECA/TRADE/38), were to be re-examined by the secretariat and submitted to the next meeting of experts for consideration.

19. During the discussion that followed, it was agreed that all the above outstanding issues in question should be referred to the Conference of Ministers in June 1986.

20. With regard to the number of Executive Directors, the meeting felt that the Fund should start with a small number and expand the Executive Board in response to the expansion of the operations of the Fund. The issue of the scope and size of the Fund was also discussed and it was pointed out that this was closely related to the subscribed capital of the Fund. It was suggested that with an initial capital of 500 million African Units of Account (AUA), the size of the secretariat would be small and the Executive Directors would be non-resident during the initial years. After a lengthy discussion, the meeting agreed that this issue should also be referred to the ministerial conference.

Review of the draft Articles of Agreement establishing an African Monetary Fund (agenda item 5)

21. In introducing this agenda item, a representative of the secretariat referred to the paper entitled "Draft Articles of Agreement of the African Monetary Fund" (document E/ECA/TRADE/41) and apologized for not being able to distribute the document early. This delay was due to the fact that originally it had been planned to hold a Conference of African Ministers of Finance in February 1986 to consider the report of the second meeting and resolve certain outstanding issues. The draft Agreement was to be prepared after the Ministerial Conference. However, since that Conference could not be convened as planned, it was decided to prepare a draft of the Articles of Agreement based on the recommendations of the second meeting of Intergovernmental Experts Group held in April 1985. Accordingly, this meeting was expected to make concrete suggestions as to what should be included in the Articles of Agreement. It was for this reason that the secretariat had requested that the delegations should include experts from the Legal Departments in addition to those from the Ministries of Finance and the Central Banks.

22. In the discussion that followed, the meeting pointed out some of the inconsistencies in the Articles of Agreement. After lengthy discussions, it was agreed that the meeting would make a preliminary review of substantive issues to be incorporated later and redrafted in a proper legal format. The revised draft should be sent to member States well in advance of the fourth meeting of experts, to be convened immediately preceding the Conference of African Ministers of Finance to be held in Libreville, Gabon, in June 1986.

23. The meeting requested that the following amendments be reflected in the revised draft:

Preamble

The preamble should be recast and shortened, and no reference should be made to the Lagos Plan of Action.

Article 1

The "Interpretation" should be deleted;

Article 2

1. Paragraph 2 (1) should stop after the word "Fund" and the rest should be deleted.

2. (a) After consideration of this term, it was suggested that the text should not be amended and that it should be referred to the Conference of Ministers of Finance. Algeria expressed reservations regarding that suggestion;

(b) The issue of non-regional participation in the Fund will be decided by the Ministerial meeting; and

(c) Similarly the participation of institutions in the Fund will be decided by the ministerial meeting.

Article 3

Paragraph 2 (a) should now read as follows:

"to promote the expansion of intra-African trade as a means of contributing to the economic and social development of African countries".

A new subparagraph 2 (a) should be introduced which would read as follows:

"to promote the stability and convertibility of African currencies".

Article 4

The functions of the Fund should relate to its objectives. Some participants were of the view that there was need to define the kind of balance of payments financing envisaged to be carried out by the Fund. To this end, it was essential to separate short-term balance-of-payments problems from those arising out of long-term structural rigidities.

In paragraph (c), first sentence, the word "goods" should be replaced by "gold".

Paragraph (e)

The management of funds entrusted to the Fund should be carefully reviewed and appropriate formulation found.

Paragraph (k)

It was also suggested that the proposed function of "guaranteeing" loans incurred by private institutions was a banking function and should be deleted from the Agreement.

Article 6

Paragraph 1 - delete third sentence starting with "They shall" and ending with "member States".

Paragraph 3 should be redrafted to reflect that both the powers provided for in subparagraphs (a) and (b) cannot be delegated, and that other powers such as the election of the Directors and their Alternates should be vested in the Board of Governors.

Subparagraphs 3 (a), (b) and (c) were inconsistent and should all be merged into one subparagraph.

Article 7

The provision concerning the possibility of changing the number of Directors (last sentence) should be deleted.

It was also suggested that the qualifications required of Directors should not be described in the Agreement, and that Alternate Directors should be elected in the same manner as Directors.

The Directors should be elected for a period of three years only.

If a Director were absent for more than 90 days (not 180 days as proposed), a successor should be appointed in accordance with established procedures.

Article 8

Paragraphs 5 and 6 should be deleted.

Article 9

The tenure of the Managing Director should be clearly defined including his reappointment.

The issue of voting powers of the Managing Director should also be clarified, e.g., whether he only can have a "casting vote" or can in fact vote in his own capacity.

Article 10

Determination of votes to be allocated to each member State should be clarified.

Article 11

Paragraph 3: Since the issue concerning the increase in authorized capital was critical, it should not be decided by a simple majority. A delegate proposed that this be decided by 85 per cent majority of the total number of votes cast.

Article 12

The issue of decision-making was important. It was proposed that the term "majority" be defined to indicate whether the agreement requires a "simple" or "qualified" majority;

Paragraph 5 should be deleted.

Article 13

Paragraph 1 to be revised to reflect the decision of the second meeting, i.e., "40 per cent of subscriptions to be paid during the first year and the balance paid over a period of four years in equal instalments of 15 per cent per annum".

The issue of the currency in which payment of subscription would be made was referred to Ministers for a decision.

Paragraph 3 should be studied and revised with respect to the issue of "irrevocable promisory notes".

Article 14

It was suggested that "borrowings" should not constitute part of the ordinary resources of the Fund.

Article 15

Paragraph 4 dealing with special funds should be deleted since such details could be provided in other rules and regulations of the Fund to be adopted later.

Articles 16-24

To be reviewed and recast taking into account the principal objectives and functions of the Fund.

Revise the respective functions of the Board of Governors and Board of Directors concerning the management of funds.

Subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c) of Article 21 should be deleted since these relate to functions of a development bank and not a monetary institution such as the Fund.

Article 26

Delete subparagraphs 1(i) and (ii).

Subparagraph 1 (iv) dealing with debt-equity ratio should be reviewed since some delegates felt that a ratio of 2:1 was too high for such an institution.

Paragraph 2 should be deleted since this would be covered in the financial regulations to be adopted by the Board of Governors.

Article 27

This should be deleted.

Article 28

This should be deleted since this was a function to be undertaken by the Board of Directors as part of the management of the Fund's resources.

Article 34

Paragraph 1 should be deleted and replaced by a new provision which should give members the right to withdraw from membership in accordance with agreed procedures.

Article 35

One delegate suggested that the majority required for the "suspension" of a member be increased to 85 per cent.

Article 41

Delete the word "judicial" in paragraph 4 and wherever the word appears throughout the agreement.

Delete paragraph 8 (iii).

Article 42

Delete paragraph 1.

Delete paragraph 3 since no decision had been reached as to whether payments of subscriptions should be accepted in national currencies.

Paragraph 6 should be redrafted taking into account similar activities carried out by existing institutions such as the African Centre for Monetary Studies.

Paragraphs 9 and 11 deal with similar issues and should be merged.

Article 46

This should be redrafted to indicate under what laws (national or international) the settlement of disputes should be envisaged.

Article 48

Paragraph 2: Delete and substitute with the following:

"This Agreement shall enter into force upon the signature of and/or ratification by thirty-five (35) regional members".

Paragraph 3: Delete the word "Directors" in the last phrase and insert the word "Governors".

Article 49

Add a new paragraph (3) to read as follows:

"The Fund shall commence its operations after at least forty (40) per cent of the subscriptions by the regional members has been paid in, and in any event, not later than eighteen (18) months after the entry into force of this Agreement".

Consideration of the progress report on the preparations for an International Conference on Africa's External Indebtedness (agenda item 6)

24. In introducing this item, the representative of the secretariat recalled the decisions of Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery, 1986-1990 which was adopted by the twenty-first OAU summit, one of which was the call for an International Conference on Africa's External Indebtedness. The African Heads of State and Government expressed great concern at the mounting external debts which presently stood over $US 170 billion while it is estimated that between 1986 and 1990, African countries will spend somewhere between $US 15 and $US 24 billion annually for debt servicing. In fact, the debt service ratio as a percentage of exports of many African countries was very high and in some cases up to over 300 per cent. He referred to the seriousness of African debt situation within the context of proposals for the continent's economic programme, and stressed the urgent need for such a conference to discuss these problems. He stressed that the possibilities for organizing the conference were not certain, given the reticence of the major creditor countries. The secretariat had, however, unofficially contacted the IMF and World Bank with a view to soliciting the support of the international community for the proposed conference.

25. He informed the meeting that as a step towards the preparation of the proposed conference, a meeting of the secretariats of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the African Development Bank (ADB) and the African Centre for Monetary Studies (ACMS) was held in Addis Ababa in December 1985 to discuss the modalities for the Conference (EDECO/MF/18/1984.85). The secretariats identified major issues relevant to such a conference such as objectives of the conference and expected results; the type and quality of documentation to be prepared; the date, venue and duration of the conference; who should be invited to participate; and the chairmanship of the conference. He stressed that the success of the proposed conference depended upon very careful preparation taking into account all these matters.

26. As a result of the inter-secretariat meeting, he said, the paper entitled "Draft outline on a paper to be prepared on issues and proposals for the International Conference on Africa's External Indebtedness" (E/ECA/OAU/TRADE/48) was being presented to this meeting for consideration. It was suggested that the paper for the proposed international conference should consist of the following three parts or sections: (a) evolution and structure of the external debt situation in Africa; (b) medium and long-term outlook of Africa's external debt 1986-2000 (with or without substantive debt relief measures); and (c) measures and approaches for solving Africa's external debt problems. Such a submission would be prepared jointly by ECA, OAU, ADB and ACMS secretariats. The purpose of the agenda item was therefore to seek the views of the experts on these issues so as to assist in the preparation of the African submission to the conference.

27. In the discussion that followed, some delegations expressed concern that the paper on this important subject had not been sent to them in advance to enable them to review it thoroughly so as to make comprehensive comments. Several pertinent suggestions were made on issues and methodology to be included in the studies on Africa's external debt. The meeting felt that because of the critical nature of the external debt problem, it was essential that the studies be of the highest quality. One delegation proposed that a number of studies be carried out to emphasize the following: (a) while a two-year moratorium of debt service payments would have negligible effect on the economies of creditor countries, it would have significant positive impact on African debtor countries; (b) solvency of African debtor countries would have a positive effect on some sectors of the economies of creditor countries; and (c) what part of Africa's debts can be directly attributed to external factors, such deterioration in terms of trade and fluctuations of major currencies. In order to succeed in bringing out their net effects, micro- and macro-economic analytical and mathematical approaches would be useful. It was generally agreed that some criteria should be established as to who should be invited to participate at the proposed international conference on Africa's external indebtedness and that multilateral creditor institutions should be included in the list of participants. This was particularly important because the credits from such institutions had not been subject to rescheduling or other forms of debt relief in the past.

28. In reply to a question on contacts with major creditors called for by the twenty-first OAU summit, the secretariat replied that contacts had been slow and difficult as a result of the rather unfavourable attitude of some major creditor countries towards the proposed international conference. The meeting was briefed that the current Chairman of OAU attaches great importance to the proposed conference. The meeting was also informed that the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had already decided to use reflows from the Trust Fund resources to establish a Special Adjustment Facility, using the same eligibility criteria as those for International Development Association (IDA) credits, for countries faced with serious balance-of-payments problems.

29. At the end of its deliberations, the meeting endorsed the proposed outline of the study to be prepared for the international conference and stressed the need to ensure adequate preparations and high quality professional papers. The meeting also expressed concern at the negative attitude of some members of the international community to the proposed conference.

Any other business (agenda item 7)

30. Under this agenda item, the representative of the secretariat outlined a tentative timetable for the establishment of the proposed African Monetary Fund. He stated that taking into account the various considerations and based on experience gained in other African regional and subregional

organizations, it was not expected that the Agreement establishing the African Monetary Fund would come into force before 1 January 1988. Therefore, taking that date into account, it was proposed that following this meeting, the draft Articles of Agreement would be revised taking into account the amendments proposed. This would immediately be sent to all African countries for consideration. It was proposed to hold a two-day meeting of experts to consider the draft Articles of Agreement prior to the Conference of African Ministers of Finance to be held in Libreville, Gabon, in June 1986. After the adoption of the Articles of Agreement by the Ministers, these amendments would be incorporated in a final text to be sent to all African countries by December 1986. It was then proposed to convene a meeting of African plenipotentiaries to sign the Agreement by March/April 1987. Following that meeting, the member States would be given a period of six to nine months during which the Articles of Agreement would be ratified where applicable. It was hoped that by January 1988, the required number of signatures and ratifications would be obtained to enable the Agreement to enter into force on that date.

31. The meeting, after reviewing the proposed timetable, agreed that all efforts should be made to ensure that the Agreement establishing an African Monetary Fund should come into force on 1 January 1988. In reply to a question concerning the date of commencement of the Fund, the secretariat informed the meeting that a distinction had to be made between entering into force of the Agreement and the commencement of the operation of the Fund. It was proposed that the operations of the Fund should start only after at least 40 per cent of the subscriptions had been received by the Executive Secretary of ECA, and in any event, not later than 18 months after the date of entry into force of the Agreement. If, after that period, the required minimum subscriptions of 40 per cent were not received, the meeting agreed that the Executive Secretary of ECA should convene a meeting of all countries which had signed the Agreement to review the situation and recommend what further action needed to be taken.

Adoption of the report and closure of the meeting (agenda item 3)

32. Following the introduction of the draft report of the meeting by the Rapporteur, the meeting considered it paragraph by paragraph and adopted it with amedments.

33. A vote of thanks was moved by the representative of Kenya. She expressed gratitude on behalf of the meeting to His Excellency Paul Biya, President of the Republic of Cameroon and to the Government and people of Cameroon for the warm hospitality and excellent facilities placed at the disposal of the meeting, which contributed to its success. She also expressed appreciation to the Chairman of the meeting for the able and competent manner in which he had conducted the meeting.

34. In closing the meeting, the Chairman apologized on behalf of the Minister of Finance who was unable to be present due to other previous engagements. He warmly thanked all participants for their positive contributions to the deliberations of the meeting, and expressed the hope that they would be present at the fourth meeting of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts, to be held in Libreville, Gabon, immediately preceding the Conference of African Ministers of Finance in June 1986. He also thanked the secretariat and the technical staff for their work in servicing the meeting.